

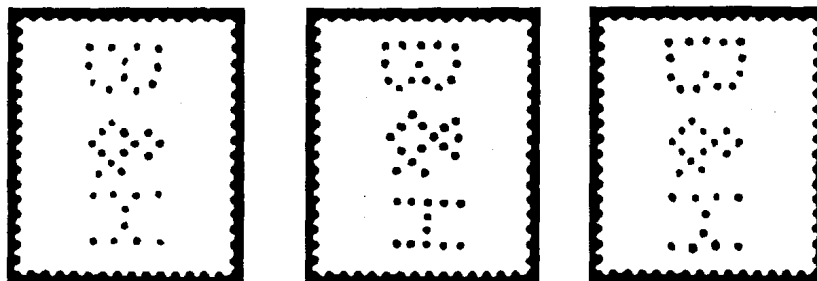
"Buck & Hickman" covers frequently crop up in Perfin Society Auctions, but what do we know of their history. The following brief details have been taken, with grateful acknowledgements, from the company website.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century three brothers, George, Joseph, and Matthew Buck were toolmakers and dealers working in London. Their sister, Ann Buck married John Roe Hickman in 1820, after which (c1840) Ann Hickman opened a small tool shop in the name of 'Buck & Co' in the East End of London. The business flourished under Ann and John, and by the time they moved (in 1859) to Whitechapel Road, they had become 'Buck & Hickman'.



It is not known quite when 'Buck & Hickman' first started using perfins, but the first dies we know of are the large-lettered 'SPG' types by Waterlows, with Eastern Depot, and London E postmarks. Although many different varieties are known, three typical examples are shown below.

1895-1906

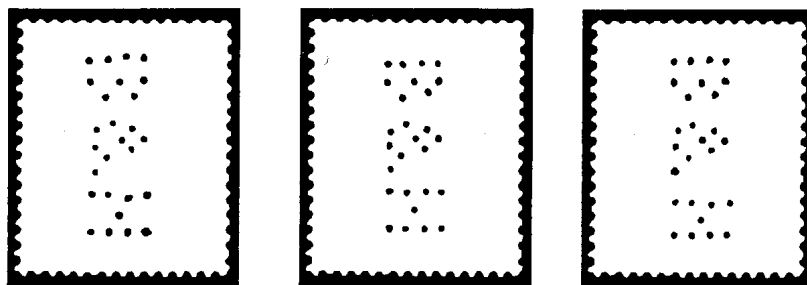


B3240.09v

Branches were opened in Glasgow (1901), and Manchester (1905), but by the time Birmingham was opened (1909), Waterlows had changed to their small-lettered 'SPG' types.

Again, three examples are illustrated to show the variation that can be found. Known postmarks are only for London E, but can anyone report Glasgow, Manchester, or Birmingham?

1906-1915



B3240.05v

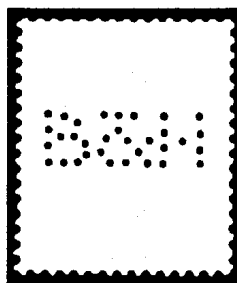
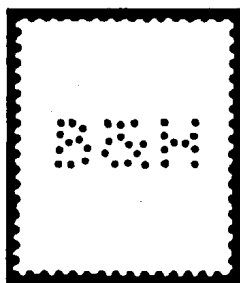
Buck and Hickman played an important role in both wars, providing both tools and manpower. Can anyone fill the gap with a "B&H" die with London E postmarks, in use 1915-1930?

The next die positively identified with Buck & Hickman was "B&H" (B3240.01), known used 1930-1935. The die was probably single headed based on the same two missing pins in the "H" found on issues 'M' and W.

This die was followed by a short-lived Sloper 12 x 1 multi-headed die "B&W" (B3240.04M), believed destroyed in the blitz on Sloper's premises in May 1941. This later die was also used by Slopers to initial stamps for Boosey & Hawkes.

1930-1935

1939-1941

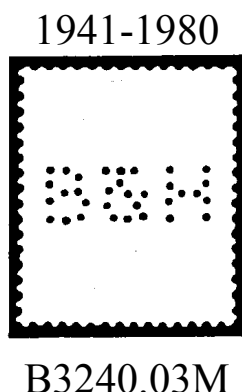


B3240.01

B3240.04M

Like Slopers, the Whitechapel premises of Buck & Hickman were badly damaged in WWII, during which period the company had to operate out of 25 different locations.

Slopers never produced any Wartime Provisional "B&H" letterings, preferring to make a brand new 12 x 1 multi-headed die which we know of as "B&H" (B3240.03M). This was used by Slopers to initial stamps not only for Buck & Hickman, but also Boosey & Hawkes, and the British Band Instruments Co Ltd (presumably associated in some way with Boosey & Hawkes).



I have a handful of covers with this die with the following return addresses, and dates - would anyone else like to add any others?

Buck & Hickman Ltd.

2 & 4 Whitechapel Rd, London E1 - 27th June 1947.

P.O. Box 148, Adair St, Manchester 1 - 13th July 1965.

49 Robertson St, Glasgow – 1st July 1966.

Also known is Victoria Rd, St Philips, Bristol 2.

Their telegraphic address and Trade Name is ROEBUCK with clear associations to the founders Ann Hickman (nee Ruck) and her husband John Roe Hickman.

The company still operates under the name of 'Buck & Hickman in One', claiming to be the UK's No.1 distributor of Industrial Tools and Supplies. The head office was moved from Queen St, Sheffield to Coventry in 1996, and today there are 29 branches on the UK mainland, but sadly, perfins are no longer used.

There are two more questions yet to be answered:

1. When did Buck & Hickman become a Limited Company?
2. When did they stop using perfins?

Any help in answering these and the other queries is welcomed!